

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0441

INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 1732

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

EXDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY INGERSOLL FROM AMBASSADOR CRONK

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP

SUBJECT: PROPOSED CINCPAC VISIT TO SINGAPORE

1. I HAVE RECEIVED MESSAGE FROM CINCPAC INFORMING ME THAT HE PROPOSES ATTEND CONFERENCE SPONSORED BY INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES OF LONDON ON "PROSPECTS FOR SECURITY IN SEA" WHICH IS TO BE HELD IN SINGAPORE MAY 31 TO JUNE 3. HE PLANS TO BRING POLAD WITH HIM. SINGAPORE INSTITUTE OF SEA STUDIES CO-SPONSOR. ACCORDING ADMIRAL GAYLER'S MESSAGE APPROXIMATELY 30 PARTICIPANTS WILL ATTEND CONFERENCE FROM ASIA, US AND WESTERN EUROPE WITH PRIME MINISTER LEE SCHEDULED TO MAKE OPENING ADDRESS.

2. ADMIRAL GAYLER HAS ASKED MY OPINION WHETHER HIS PRESENCE IN SINGAPORE AT THAT TIME WOULD BE APPROPRIATE AND HAS INDICATED THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO MEET WITH THE PRIME MINISTER AND OTHERS IN SINGAPORE WITHIN TIME LIMITS IMPOSED BY CONFERENCE SCHEDULE. (HE INDICATES THAT HE PLANS TO ATTEND
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ONLY JUNE 1 AND 2 CONFERENCE SESSIONS.) THERE

IS NO INDICATION FROM HIS MESSAGE THAT CINCPAC'S PARTICIPATION IN CONFERENCE OR HIS VISIT TO SINGAPORE HAS BEEN CLEARED WITH SECSTATE.

3. ALTHOUGH I WOULD NORMALLY WELCOME OFFICIAL VISIT FROM CINCPAC TO SINGAPORE, FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS RAISE SERIOUS RESERVATIONS IN MY MIND RE WISDOM OF HIS ATTENDING THIS CONFERENCE AT THIS TIME:

A. PRESENCE OF CINCPAC AT SYMPOSIUM OF THIS SORT MIGHT BE MINOR EVENT IN LONDON, BUT IT WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY ATTRACT GREAT ATTENTION IN SINGAPORE AND RAISE NUMEROUS QUESTIONS WHETHER HIS PARTICIPATION HERE FOR 2 DAYS HAS MAJOR POLITICAL/MILITARY SIGNIFICANCE FOR SINGAPORE AND THE AREA.

B. IN VIEW CURRENT INTEREST IN INDIAN OCEAN/DIEGO GARCIA AS WELL AS INDOCHINA SITUATION, CINCPAC WILL PROBABLY BE QUESTIONED ON ALL ASPECTS OF US POLICY IN THESE AREAS. AS YOU KNOW, GOS VIEWS ON INDIAN OCEAN AND DIEGO GARCIA DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSITE VIEWS OF INDONESIAN AND MALAYAN GOVERNMENTS AND PUBLIC AIRING OF OUR VIEWS COULD BE POLITICALLY EMBARRASSING TO GOS. FURTHERMORE, LOS CONFERENCE WILL HAVE JUST OPENED IN CARACAS AND IT WOULD BE MOST SURPRISING IF HE DID NOT RECEIVE NUMEROUS QUESTIONS ON US POSITION ON INTERNATIONAL STRAITS (INCLUDING STRAITS OF MALACCA) AND ARCHIPELAGOES. THIS IS ANOTHER AREA IN WHICH GOS VIEWS ARE AT VARIANCE WITH GOM AND GOI. GIVEN NATURE OF SYMPOSIUM, IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT FOR CINCPAC TO DUCK THESE QUESTIONS AND WE WOULD HAVE TO EXPECT THAT HIS ANSWERS WOULD RECEIVE CONSIDERABLE PUBLICITY.

C. FINALLY, YOU SHOULD BE AWARE THAT CINCPAC HAS NOT YET PAID OFFICIAL VISIT TO SINGAPORE. HE CONSIDERED DOING SO DURING HIS LAST VISIT TO CONFIDENTIAL

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MALAYSIA AND INDONESIA BUT DROPPED SINGAPORE FROM HIS ITINERARY BECAUSE PRIME MINISTER LEE WAS NOT HERE. CONSEQUENTLY, A FIRST VISIT TO SINGAPORE PRIMARILY TO ATTEND A SYMPOSIUM SPONSORED BY NON-OFFICIAL ORGANIZATION COULD PROVE EMBARRASSING.

4. COMMENT: FOR ABOVE REASONS I QUESTION WHETHER IT IS IN OVERALL INTEREST OF THE

USG FOR CINCPAC TO ATTEND THIS CONFERENCE IN SINGAPORE
AT THIS TIME. HOWEVER, I RECOGNIZE DEPARTMENT
IS IN BETTER POSITION TO WEIGH CONSIDERATIONS
SET FORTH PARA 3B. IF DEPARTMENT BELIEVES
THAT CINCPAC ATTENDANCE AT SYMPOSIUM WOULD BE
USEFUL, I MIGHT BE ABLE TO OVERCOME PROBLEM
SET FORTH PARA 3C BY APPROPRIATE CONSULTATIONS
WITH GOS AND BY TRYING ARRANGE CALLS ON PM AND
DR. GOH PRIOR TO OPENING OF SYMPOSIUM. HOWEVER, GOS
MIGHT HAVE RESERVATIONS SIMILAR THOSE SET
FORTH PARA 3A. I WOULD APPRECIATE
RECEIVING YOUR COMMENTS ASAP BEFORE RESPONDING
TO ADMIRAL GAYLER'S MESSAGE.
CRONK

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